

SENATE—Wednesday, March 16, 2005

The Senate met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SAM BROWBACK, a Senator from the State of Kansas.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God our help, before we begin the challenges of this day, we pause to acknowledge our need of You. We come to You for refuge. We need You to go with us to order our steps. Help us to shape today's priorities in a way that will please You. Go before us to touch the hearts of people we need to influence.

Guide the Members and officers of this body with Your wisdom. Strengthen them, Lord, as they seek to be faithful stewards of the great opportunities You have given them to serve.

O God of love, all the good things we have are from You. Give us the wisdom to slow down long enough to discover Your plan.

All this we ask in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable SAM BROWBACK led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2005.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable SAM BROWBACK, a Senator from the State of Kansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BROWBACK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning we will begin consideration of the budget resolution. We have an order in place from last night which sets aside specific debate times in relation to several amendments this morning. We will debate an NIH amendment, to be followed by additional debate on the ANWR amendment, to be followed by further debate on two veterans amendments. At the conclusion of those debates, we will vote on the pending Amtrak amendment and the pending ANWR amendment. We also anticipate that we will reach agreement to vote on some of the other previously discussed amendments. Senators could therefore expect a series of votes to begin sometime between 12:30 and 1 o'clock today.

I thank the chairman and ranking member of the Budget Committee for working out a reasonable approach for the consideration of these issues. Once again, we will continue through the afternoon and evening on additional amendments with votes throughout the session.

I yield the floor.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2006

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 18, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 18) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for the fiscal year 2006 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2005 and 2007 through 2010.

Pending:

Byrd amendment No. 158, to provide adequate funding of \$1.4 billion in fiscal year 2006 to preserve a national intercity passenger rail system.

Cantwell amendment No. 168, to strike section 201(a)(4) relative to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Akaka amendment No. 149, to increase veterans medical care by \$2.8 billion in 2006.

Ensign amendment No. 171, to increase veterans medical care by \$410,000,000 in fiscal year 2006.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the

Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, is recognized for up to 20 minutes.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, as we all know, this budget cuts a score of critical domestic programs: food for women and infants; community development block grants for cities, which cities use for vital purposes; and health and education programs for children. That is just a few. It cuts Medicaid by \$15 billion over 5 years. It zeros out reimbursements to States and counties of the cost of incarcerating criminal aliens. It is an unfunded mandate in that regard. Yet this budget contains \$41.3 million for nuclear weapons initiatives including \$8.5 million for a nuclear program that scientists say is impossible to achieve.

The seriousness of the issue and the clear intent of this administration to renew funding this year for this nuclear initiative that was zeroed out by the Congress last year compel me to come to the floor today.

President Bush's fiscal year 2006 budget calls for \$8.5 million, including \$4 million for the Department of Energy and \$4.5 million for the Department of Defense, for the research and development of a nuclear bunker buster, a 100-kiloton weapon called the robust earth nuclear penetrator. The purpose of the research is to determine whether a missile casing on a 100-kiloton warhead can survive a thrust into the earth and take out a hardened and deeply buried military target without spewing millions of cubic feet of radioactive debris into the atmosphere. Scientists know that the laws of physics will not allow that to happen.

It includes \$25 million to lower the Nevada test site time-to-test readiness from the current 24 to 36 months to 18 months. This sends a clear signal of an urgent move to begin underground nuclear testing as soon as possible. This is despite the fact that our country has had a moratorium on nuclear testing since 1992. We have had it for more than 13 years.

It also contains \$7.8 million for a so-called modern pit facility. This is a facility to build 450 new pits. These are the nuclear triggers for nuclear weapons, the shells in which the fissile material is contained and detonated. This is 450 new pits a year, some of which would be designed for new nuclear weapons.

Currently the United States has approximately 15,000 warheads. Under the Moscow Treaty, the United States is to decrease its strategic nuclear force to 1,700 to 2,200 by 2012. To maintain a 2,200-warhead force at replacement